

Michael F. Easley
Governor



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

For Release: **IMMEDIATE**
Date: July 1, 2003

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GOV. EASLEY PUTS STATE ON ALERT TO PREPARE FOR TROPICAL STORM 'BILL'
Encourages North Carolinians to Prepare for Potential Flash Flooding

RALEIGH – Gov. Mike Easley today put state agencies on alert and called for North Carolinians to prepare for possible flash flooding from Tropical Storm 'Bill.' The storm system is expected to bring significant rainfall and the threat of severe weather to North Carolina tonight and tomorrow, with the worst potential for flooding in the western part of the state. Weather models show that anywhere from five to eight inches of rain could fall in the mountains by 8:00 tomorrow morning.

"The greatest threat will be for flash flooding in the small creeks and gorges in the mountains and in low-lying areas elsewhere," said Easley. "People should pay close attention to news broadcasts about the weather in their area and take immediate action if flood warnings are issued.

"People living in low-lying or flood prone areas should take extra precautions during this storm," added Easley. "In the event of flooding, motorists should stay off the roadways."

The State Emergency Response Team was briefed this afternoon and state agencies are prepared to respond should any resources be needed to assist local emergency teams. The North Carolina State Highway Patrol and the Department of Transportation will watch for flooded roads and bridges. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Dam Safety Office will monitor dams. Wildlife Resources, State Parks and the Forest Service have been alerted to possible flooding in campgrounds where people may be spending the July 4th holiday week. The Department of Health and Human Services is also monitoring the situation and is working with local offices in preparation for opening any necessary shelters.

The National Weather Service has issued a flood watch for all areas of the state west of Interstate 95. Flood warnings are already being issued in some of the westernmost counties, and a river flood warning has been issued for some areas along the French Broad River. The Weather Service's forecast indicates the heaviest rainfall will occur in Cherokee, Swain, Macon and Haywood counties. The worst downpours are predicted to happen after midnight and taper off through Wednesday, with rainfall ending by Thursday. The storm system is moving quickly and is not expected to linger over the state.

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